

From: [Sierra Club Membership Services](#) on behalf of [Chuck Knutson](#)
To: [Scoping_Delta_Plan@Delta_Council](#)
Subject: Delta Plan Scoping Comments
Date: Sunday, January 23, 2011 11:06:03 PM

Jan 24, 2011

Chair Philip Isenberg
CA

Dear Chair Isenberg,

Dear Mr. Isenberg:

As a retired State Department of Fish and Game senior fishery biologist, I am very concerned about the Bay-Delta ecosystem collapse which appears to be continuing with no end in sight. Dramatic changes in water management practices appear to be in order, if the ecosystem is ever to be restored.

Water flowing into the Bay-Delta estuary is over-appropriated and ecosystem restoration will require stronger flow standards and reductions in average annual diversions. I recommend that the Council use the following broad recommendations to guide the development of the draft Delta Plan and a draft EIR that analyzes a broad set of alternatives.

1. Guarantee Fresh Water to Support & Restore the Delta Ecosystem: The Bay-Delta ecosystem is a national and statewide resource critical to California's human and economic health, to the plants, fish and wildlife that live there, and to the health of our communities.
2. Enforce Existing Water Pollution Control Laws: Commit to full implementation and enforcement of state and federal laws to protect both surface water and groundwater quality. The state is failing to meet existing standards to protect Bay-Delta surface water and groundwater quality, and is lagging in the development of new standards and pollutant loads needed to ensure the health of the estuary's waters. Contaminants such as salt, selenium, mercury, ammonia, nutrients and pesticides pollute drinking water and damage the health of the Delta, and the damage is mounting. Support should be given to implementing the new NPDES permit requiring tertiary treatment and additional filtration for the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District's sewage discharge into the Sacramento River at Freeport.
3. Reducing Reliance on the Delta for Water Supplies: Recognize that California has dramatic opportunities to invest in regional water supplies (e.g. agricultural and urban conservation, waste water recycling, groundwater management and urban storm water capture) that can allow the state to meet its future needs, while simultaneously facilitating the restoration of the Bay-Delta ecosystem.
4. More Water Exports Should Not be Promised before Safe Limits are Established: Existing and future export of fresh water flows from the Bay-Delta estuary should be contingent on ensuring sufficient water to support and restore the Bay-Delta ecosystem in perpetuity; and

5. Reduce Risks to people and property by determining a safe yield for water exports: A "water grab" that allows more water exports from the Bay-Delta estuary, ignoring the constraints of nature, expanding exports by promising unrealistic inflated quantities of water does not promote reliability, but rather promotes conflict. Providing water to areas north and south of the Delta must protect the habitat and local economies of the Sierra, Northern California, Delta, San Francisco and San Pablo bays, and the Sacramento and San Joaquin River regions.

6. Enforce water rights: Don't allow politically-connected and powerful interests to sell publicly owned water supplies at a profit while damaging surrounding communities and their water supplies.

7. Protect Taxpayers: Taxpayers must not be required again, either through bonds or direct payments, to absorb the costs of exporting water. Any plan adopted to export water out of the Delta from the Northern California and Sierra watersheds must be cost effective and ensure that those who export water from the Bay-Delta estuary pay for the design, construction, operation, maintenance and mitigation costs of such a facility.

8. Human population growth in areas that are dependent on water from the Bay-Delta Estuary should not be encouraged with promises of more water in the future. Otherwise, water demand will continue to rise with increasing human populations and water conservation goals will not be realized for ecosystem restoration purposes.

Thank you for considering the above comments. I look forward to following the work of the Council as it develops the Delta Plan.

Sincerely,

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